

**TOWN OF HOPKINTON BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Town, School District, Hopkinton Village and Contoocook Village Precincts**  
**Wednesday, January 19, 2022**  
**\*\*Approved February 9, 2022\*\***

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mark Zankel called the meeting to order at 5:30pm immediately followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Please note that all votes taken during this meeting shall be done by Roll Call vote.**

**Don Houston motioned, seconded by Ken Traum, to allow Deb Norris and Jonathan Cohen to attend via zoom.**

**Roll Call of Members:**

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT** – There were 8 Members present, 2 via Zoom

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Don Houston	Present	Rich Houston	Present
Norm Goupil	Present	Thomas Lipoma	Present
Ken Traum	Present	Christa Scura	Present
Steve Reddy	Present	Mark Zankel	Present
Jonathan Cohen	Zoom	Deb Norris	Zoom

**OTHER ATTENDEES:**

Neal Cass, Town Administrator; Michael Flynn, Superintendent of Schools; Michelle R. Clark, SFO, Business Administrator (via Zoom)

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF January 12, 2022**

**Ken Traum motioned, to approve the Draft January 12, 2022 meeting minutes. Norm Goupil seconded the motion.** Mark Zankel asked for any clarifications or corrections. There were none.

A roll call vote was taken to approve the January 12, 2022 minutes.

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Don Houston	Approved	Rich Houston	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Christa Scura	Approved
Steve Reddy	Approved	Mark Zankel	Approved
Jonathan Cohen	Approved via Zoom	Deb Norris	Approved Via Zoom

**The vote passed 10-0.**

**TOWN BUDGET UPDATES – Ken Traum and Neal Cass**

Ken Traum reported on each of the Warrant Articles stating that there are no major differences to report other than what was given at the January 12, 2022 meeting. He proceeded to read each Article. Mark Zankel asked for any questions regarding the Articles. There were none.

Mark Zankel stated that this is the opportunity to ask questions as we will be voting this evening on all Articles for all of the budgets as noted in Item 7 of the agenda. Mark Zankel thanked Ken Traum and Neal Cass for the presentation.

### **HOPKINTON SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET – Norm Goupil and Michael Flynn**

Norm Goupil began by thanking the many persons who contributed to preparing the budget. He introduced Michael Flynn, Superintendent of Schools, who will answer questions posed by the Budget Committee at the meeting of January 12, 2022 relating to the budget presented at that time.

Michael Flynn reviewed his goals for the District stating that over this past year it was a reevaluation of what we budget and how can we do better. He provided examples of spending and how it affected the budget. He then moved on to the questions which were presented by the Budget Committee at the last meeting.

The first question was in regard to the proposed Food Service budget. Michael Flynn explained how the process goal is to eliminate the fund balance noting that this cannot be done all at once. He proceeded to review the Food Service Analysis which had been provided to the members.

Michael Flynn and Norm Goupil along with Michelle Clark proceeded to answer questions from the members. It was stated that the previous administration had always relied on fund balance to cover costs for food service. The reason for the \$1 in the line item was to transfer from general fund into the fund balance. Without the \$1 we would not be able to transfer the funds. Michelle Clark stated that budget transfers go to the Board, that is how those transfers covered the food service.

Michael Flynn then reviewed the Estimated Revenue and Expenses Food Service spreadsheet pointing out the deficit line. He stated that if our goal is to budget for what we ask for, we now have to budget for the deficit of food service because it is our goal to come to where we will not depend on the fund balance to cover that cost.

Michael Flynn stated it was discussed by the School Board to eliminate the fund balance in one year and it was agreed that was not a smart move. We are attempting to do that over 2 to 3 years. This is a calculated slow risk with a small chunk this year and then next year we may know better and budget accordingly. He stated that it is protection with appropriate forecasting that needs to be done.

The discussion continued and answer and questions session was held on the remaining questions of the Budget Committee that were made during the last meeting regarding programmatic budget, ESSR funds, and tax impact.

Michael Flynn then started his review of the Warrant Articles, reading each aloud and allowing time for questions and answer session. A brief discussion was held of the Articles and addressed by Michael Flynn and Norm Goupil.

Following the review of Articles, Jonathan Cohen commented his support of the lawsuit to get the State to more adequately fund towns. He stated that there is not adequate funding and that causes a strain on the town.

Deb Norris expressed her support as well.

Following discussion it was agreed that a statement regarding the law suit would be made as a separate item introduced by the Budget Committee at Public Hearing.

Mark Zankel asked if there were any further questions regarding the Warrant Articles of the Hopkinton School District. There were none.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mark Zankel opened up Public Comment session. One person in attendance.

Loren Clement, 86 Maple Street, Contoocook, NH asked for clarification on the trust fund warrant article. He asked if the idea is to be one time funded. As the goal is to bring fund balance down, where will the money for it come from next year?

Michael Flynn added that at end of this year it may be needed to ask the voters for more money to fund this next year.

Loren Clement stated he is trying to understand the differences between the food service deficit and the fund balance and the trusts. He stated it is like shuffling.

Michael Flynn explained it is more shifting of the money. The money is there just shifting to where it needs to be spent.

Loren Clement stated in reference to the Restricted Fund Balance that was noted in one document presented, is there ever anything there. Michelle Clark stated that if we needed to reserve monies for legal that is where that would go.

Mark Zankel asked for any comments from those in attendance on line or via zoom.

Deb Norris thanked the School District for the work done and the way it was laid out. It was very clear. She stated it was appreciated for all the work done on it. Michel Flynn especially thanked Michelle Clark for all of her work.

Mark Zankel closed the public comment session.

### **BUDGET COMMITTEE DELIBERATION ON PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGETS AND WARRANT ARTICLES TO PRESENT AT 2/9/22 PUBLIC HEARING**

Mark Zankel explained that it is the Budget Committee's task to convene and lead a Public Hearing on the Drafted Proposed Budgets and Budget related Warrant Articles, which will take place on Wednesday, February 9, 2022. It is the responsibility of the Budget Committee to determine which Budgets they will recommend. The Budgets will be presented to the Budget Committee and voted on one-by-one.

### **TOWN BUDGET**

Ken Traum read Article 5: Operating Budget (Ken noted that Article V is the only article needing a vote) A brief discussion was held.

**Ken Traum made a motion that the Budget Committee approve Warrant Article #5 for the Operating Budget of \$8,283,514.** Don Houston seconded the motion. Mark Zankel asked for any discussion.

It was noted that this Article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately.

A vote was taken:

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Don Houston	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Christa Scura	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Jonathan Cohen	Approved
Steve Reddy	Approved	Deb Norris	Approved
Mark Zankel	Approved	Rich Houston	Approved

The motion passed 10-0.

**CONTOOCOOK PRECINCT BUDGET**

**Motion by Don Houston to see if the Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$118,129 for General Government Expenses.** Steve Reddy seconded the motion. Mark Zankel asked for any discussion. There was none.

A vote was taken:

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Don Houston	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Christa Scura	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Jonathan Cohen	Approved
Steve Reddy	Approved	Deb Norris	Approved
Mark Zankel	Approved	Rich Houston	Approved

The motion passed 10-0.

**HOPKINTON VILLAGE PRECINCT**

**Motion by Thomas Lipoma to see if the Village Precinct will vote to raise the sum of \$26,661 for the general expenses of the Precinct; to be offset by \$8,598 from the unassigned fund balance with \$18,063 to come from taxation.** Steve Reddy seconded the motion. Mark Zankel asked for any discussion. There was none.

A vote was taken.

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Don Houston	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Christa Scura	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Jonathan Cohen	Approved
Steve Reddy	Approved	Deb Norris	Approved
Mark Zankel	Approved	Rich Houston	Approved

The motion passed 10-0.

**HOPKINTON SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Norm Goupil made a motion that the Budget Committee approve the School District Article II Operating Budget of \$22,553,797.** Rich Houston seconded the motion.

A brief discussion followed regarding changes that could or could not be made prior to the Public Hearing. It was noted that the Operating Budget is the only Article that a change could be made.

A vote was taken.

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Don Houston	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Christa Scura	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Jonathan Cohen	Approved
Steve Reddy	Approved	Deb Norris	Approved
Mark Zankel	Approved	Rich Houston	Approved

**The motion passed 10-0.**

**Norm Goupil made a motion that the Budget Committee approve the School District Article III – HEA 3 year Contract estimated increases:**

**2022-2023     \$393,082.00**

**2023-2024     \$364,498.00**

**2024-2025     \$350,189.00**

Rich Houston seconded the motion. Mark Zankel asked for any discussion. There was none.

A vote was taken.

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Don Houston	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Christa Scura	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Jonathan Cohen	Approved
Steve Reddy	Approved	Deb Norris	Approved
Mark Zankel	Approved	Rich Houston	Approved

**The motion passed 10-0.**

**Norm Goupil made a motion that the Budget Committee approve the School District Article V – HESS 2 year Contract estimated increases:**

**2022-2023     \$122,889.00**

**2023-2024     \$60,818.00**

Thomas Lipoma seconded the motion. Mark Zankel asked for any discussion. There was none.

A vote was taken.

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Don Houston	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Christa Scura	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Jonathan Cohen	Approved
Steve Reddy	Approved	Deb Norris	Approved
Mark Zankel	Approved	Rich Houston	Approved

**The motion passed 10-0.**

**Norm Goupil made a motion that the Budget Committee approve the School District Article VII – Building Repair and Maintenance Trust of \$200,000 (\$100,00 – Fund Balance, \$100,00 tax).** Steve Reddy seconded the motion. Mark Zankel asked for any discussion. There was none.

A vote was taken.

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Don Houston	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Christa Scura	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Jonathan Cohen	Approved
Steve Reddy	Approved	Deb Norris	Approved
Mark Zankel	Approved	Rich Houston	Approved

**The motion passed 10-0.**

**Norm Goupil made a motion that the Budget Committee approve the School District Article VIII – Special Education Trust of \$100,000 (Fund Balance, Refund from State, Zero Tax Impact).** Steve Reddy seconded the motion. Mark Zankel asked for any discussion. There was none.

A vote was taken.

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Don Houston	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Christa Scura	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Jonathan Cohen	Approved
Steve Reddy	Approved	Deb Norris	Approved
Mark Zankel	Approved	Rich Houston	Approved

**The motion passed 10-0.**

**Norm Goupil made a motion that the Budget Committee approve the School District Article IX – Benefit Trust Fund of \$200,000 (Fund Balance, Health Trust Refund, Zero Tax Impact).** Christa Scura seconded the motion. Mark Zankel asked for any discussion. There was none.

A vote was taken.

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Don Houston	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Christa Scura	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Jonathan Cohen	Approved
Steve Reddy	Approved	Deb Norris	Approved
Mark Zankel	Approved	Rich Houston	Approved

**The motion passed 10-0.**

**Norm Goupil made a motion that the Budget Committee approve the School District Article X – Technology Trust of \$25,000 (Fund Balance, Zero Tax Impact).** Deb Norris seconded the motion. Mark Zankel asked for any discussion. There was none.

A vote was taken.

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Don Houston	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Christa Scura	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Jonathan Cohen	Approved
Steve Reddy	Approved	Deb Norris	Approved
Mark Zankel	Approved	Rich Houston	Approved

**The motion passed 10-0.**

Mark Zankel stated that he has discussed with Neal Cass regarding the location for the Public Hearing. He reported that the Public Hearing will be held Wednesday, February 9, 2022 at 6:00PM. At this time, mask mandate and social distancing will be required. It is an unknown as to how many attendees may be at the meeting. Considering the mandates, Mark stated that more people may choose to attend remotely.

Discussion followed on different location options such as Maple Street School with Mark Zankel asking the Budget Committee their preference. It was noted that it would be recommended to have sufficient microphones available. Following discussion, Mark Zankel and the Budget Committee agreed that the Town Hall was the option of choice for holding the Public Hearing. Mark stated that he would contact Neal Cass and work out seating arrangements and other logistics for the meeting and would also contact Michael Flynn.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

Mark Zankel asked for a volunteer to prepare the Hopkinton Budget Committee report for the Annual Town Report. He stated there is a template which can be used and that he would like to have the Budget Committee highlights submitted. Rich Houston prepared last year's and volunteered to do the report again this year.

Thank you Rich!

Norm Goupil reported that he will be emailing a copy of the Strategic Plan survey to each member of the Budget Committee and ask for each member to fill it out and return.

Discussion followed on the air conditioning study conducted at Hopkinton Middle High School. Rich Houston stated that the study is available that outlines the different options and costs and he will email the results to each of the members of the Budget Committee.

**Steve Reddy motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 PM.** The motion was seconded by Don Houston. Mark Zankel asked if there was any further business.

There being no further business, a vote was taken on the motion to adjourn.

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Don Houston	Approved	Thomas Lipoma	Approved
Norm Goupil	Approved	Christa Scura	Approved
Ken Traum	Approved	Jonathan Cohen	Approved
Steve Reddy	Approved	Deb Norris	Approved
Mark Zankel	Approved	Rich Houston	Approved

**The vote passed 10-0.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Cindy Brown, Budget Committee Minute Taker  
Town of Hopkinton